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Former FBI Official Fined For 'Stupidity'

The former chief of the exhibits section of the FBI was fined $500 yesterday for converting government property to his own use.

John P. Dunphy, 47, pleaded guilty last month as part of a continuing investigation into alleged misuse of government funds by high-level FBI officials. He reportedly used about $100 worth of lumber and other materials from the FBI to build various items, including a birdhouse.

Dunphy's plea was taken in a highly irregular closed court proceeding before U.S. District Court Chief Judge William B. Jones last month. In that session, the extent of Dunphy's expected cooperation with the continuing investigation was discussed, sources said.

Dunphy told the judge yesterday, "I really have no good explanations for my actions in this instance.

"The word that keeps coming to mind is stupidity," Dunphy said. He is believed to be one of the first FBI officials in history to plead guilty to a corruption charge involving his work.

Justice Department attorneys would not comment on the investigation after Dunphy's sentencing. Dunphy could have been fined $1,000 and sentenced to a maximum jail term of one year. He was an FBI employee 28 years.